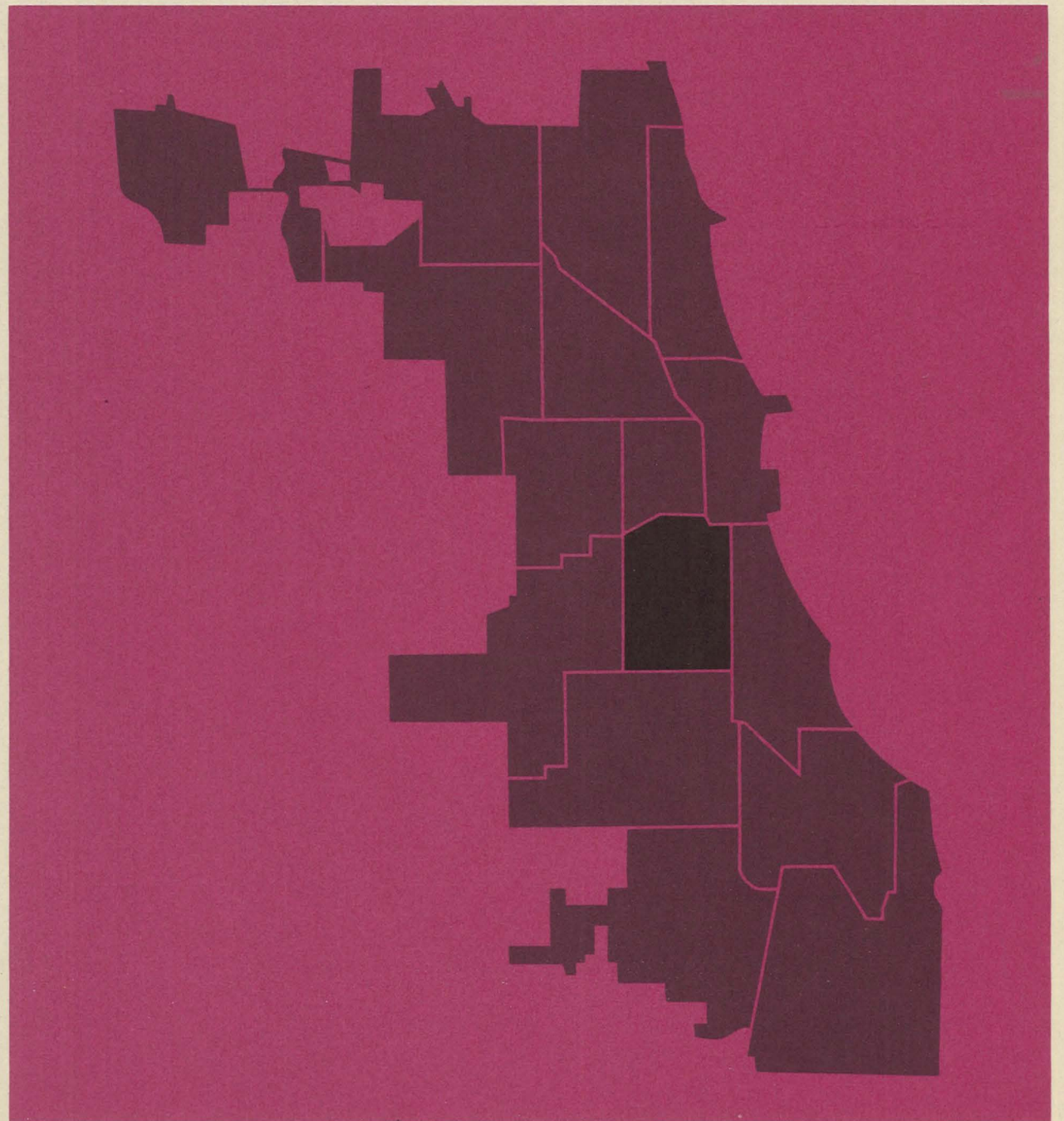


SOUTHWEST

DEVELOPMENT AREA

Department of Development and Planning



City of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, Mayor

P 104

Southwest Development Area

City of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, Mayor

Lewis W. Hill, Commissioner of Development and Planning

October 1968

Contents

| | |
|---------|--|
| page 2 | Purpose of the Development Area Reports |
| page 3 | Introduction |
| page 5 | Planning Framework—Objectives |
| page 6 | Existing Conditions and Recommendations |
| page 6 | Population Characteristics |
| page 7 | Residence |
| page 9 | Recreation |
| page 10 | Education |
| page 10 | Social Programs |
| page 11 | Public Safety and Health |
| page 12 | Business |
| page 13 | Industry |
| page 15 | Transportation |
| page 16 | Scheduled Capital Improvements |
| page 17 | Environmental Patterns in the Southwest Area |
| page 18 | Summary |

PURPOSE OF THE DEVELOPMENT AREA REPORTS

The Development Area reports have been prepared to inform Chicago citizens of the meaning of the *Comprehensive Plan's* recommendations for each area of the city, to aid in the exchange of information about community needs between citizens and government that is necessary to the development of a cooperative planning process, and to facilitate the co-ordination of plans and programs for community improvements. There are 16 Development Areas, covering the entire city, each with a population of 150,000 to 300,000 people and with a land area of 6 to 20 square miles.

The Development Area reports suggest land use changes, residential and industrial improvements, transportation improvements and community facilities and social programs needed to achieve the goals of the *Comprehensive Plan* in each area. The reports are intended to stimulate community discussion of issues, problems, and solutions. This discussion will lead to formulation of a planning framework for each area to be used by government and citizens for scheduling and co-ordinating programs and community improvements.

The various kinds of projects that the city undertakes need to be co-ordinated if they are to produce maximum benefits for the communities they serve. Experience has demonstrated that Chicago is too large to deal with as a whole in co-ordinating and scheduling specific projects. Thus, the Development Areas represent a very practical means of focusing the planning process on localized needs and conditions while remaining within the context of city-wide *Comprehensive Plan* policies and goals.

The recommendations in the Development Area reports are ideas and suggestions for consideration. They do not represent final plans for the areas, nor do they cover all issues. The reports recognize that not all planning problems have clear or immediate solutions and in some cases, questions are raised in the expectation that the best solution will evolve only through community discussion.

The Review Process

Four steps will be followed in reviewing and revising the Development Area reports:

- Each Development Area report will be distributed to civic organizations and other private groups, both within the local area and city-wide.
- Representatives of city government will meet with groups and individuals in each area to discuss the report. Findings will be modified, other ideas sought, and approaches to resolving issues will be explored.
- Appropriate revisions in the proposals will then be made, which will result in a planning framework for the Development Area. After public discussion, the planning framework would be adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission as a policy guide in reviewing projects and programs for the area.
- Using the planning framework as a guide the Department of Development and Planning will work with other agencies to modify and co-ordinate programs and projects to meet the area's critical needs and to achieve local objectives.

Chicago is constantly changing. Therefore, from time to time, each planning framework will be reviewed and adjusted or amended to reflect new needs or changes in objectives as they are identified in the continuing process of planning.

From Plans to Action

In recent years new transportation facilities, urban renewal, and other public and private developments have greatly improved the city's appearance and livability, and the opportunities and capabilities of its people. Still greater effort and further improvement will be necessary if Chicago is to meet its commitment to the strategic objectives of the *Comprehensive Plan*. In the coming years sections of the city must be rebuilt or rehabilitated to meet the rising expectations for living standards of all its people. New ways must be found for meeting social concerns, for strengthening capabilities and for broadening opportunities. Achieving the kind of city envisioned in the *Comprehensive Plan* will call for the ideas, widespread support, and involvement of all the people of Chicago.

SOUTHWEST DEVELOPMENT AREA

The Southwest Development Area is bounded by Blue Island Avenue and Cermak Road on the north, the Dan Ryan Expressway on the east, Garfield Boulevard on the south, and Western Avenue on the west.

The Area is near the central business district, is well served by the expressway system and extensive rail lines and yards, and is accessible from the South Branch and South Fork of the Chicago River.

The Development Area contains the five residential communities of Bridgeport, McKinley Park, New City, Fuller Park and Armour Square, plus two industrial concentrations of major importance to the city's economy—the Stockyards-Pershing Road Complex and the industrial district along the South Branch and South Fork of the Chicago River.

Most of the housing in the Southwest Development Area was constructed prior to 1920. Extensive private rehabilitation, stimulated by community organizations, has been responsible for improvements in the appearance of many of the neighborhoods, but other areas are showing the effects of age and neglect.

The industrial areas of the Southwest are also old and many of the problems they face are associated with their age. This was one of the first areas in the city to be developed for industry, and many of its present structures and functions are remnants of an earlier period.

Development Potential

The following are among the major con-

cerns in the Southwest Development Area:

- improvement programs should aim toward the maintenance of a favorable environment for residential neighborhoods;

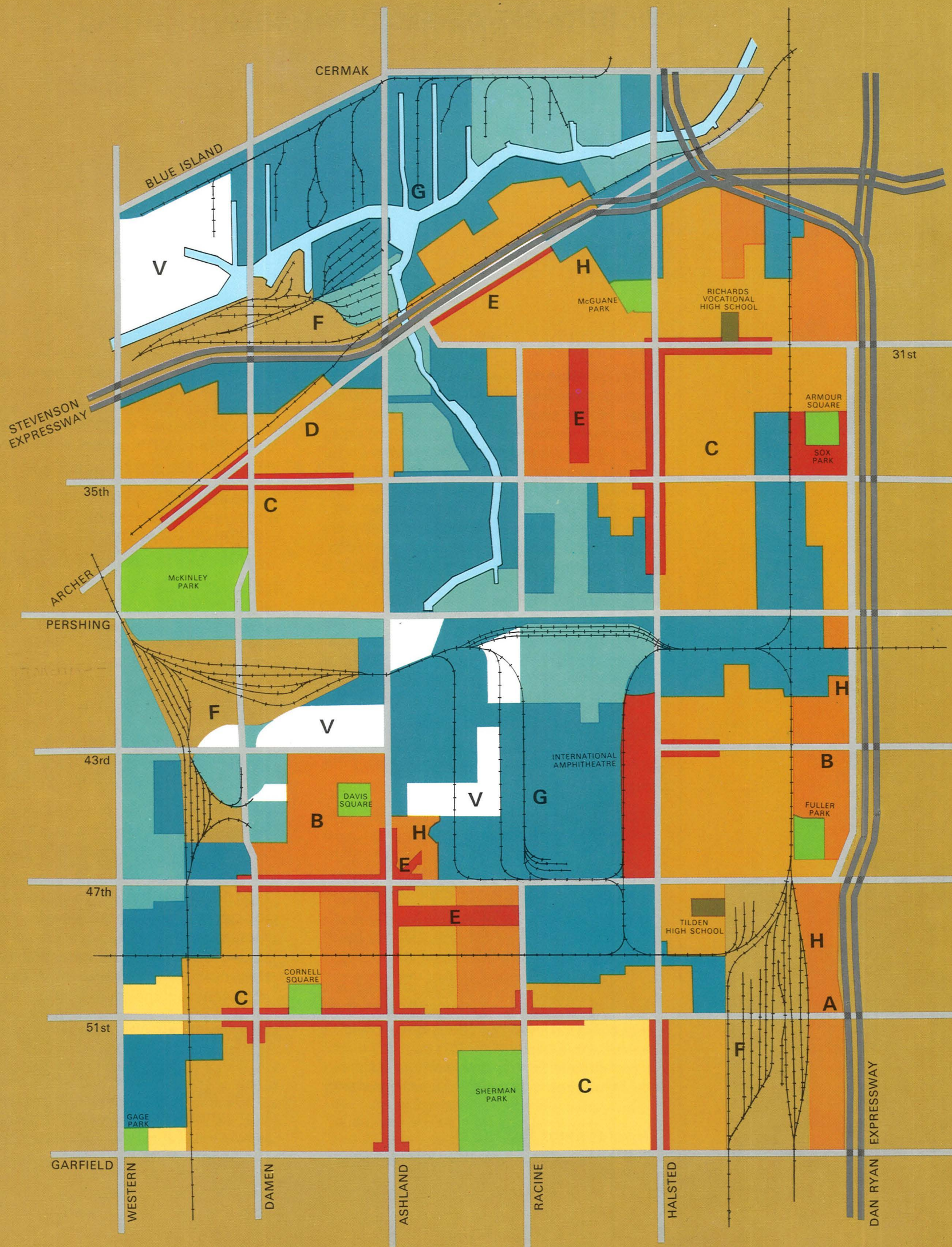
- areas where residential and industrial uses join should be studied intensively as a prelude to actions for improving the environment;

- those few residential areas that have serious environmental problems should receive early attention and assistance in determining whether existing uses can remain and be improved, or change is needed;






- the availability of community facilities and social services should be improved in nearly all neighborhoods;

- as part of a city-wide program, intensive action is essential to reduce air pollution and offensive odors in the Southwest Development Area.

Other concerns include the encouragement of organized and imaginative planning for the many large tracts of industrial vacant land to insure the return of many needed job opportunities to the Area. Further, while manufacturing structures and techniques that once formed the industrial pattern in the Southwest Development Area were obsolescent by the mid-1950's, recent improvements in goods-handling techniques have made it possible for more types of industries to operate in the many multi-story buildings found in the Southwest. These changes should make possible the high-employment density industrial development for which this centrally located Area is best suited.



Characteristics Southwest Development Area

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Residence in Good Condition |  |
| Residence in Need of Some Improvement |  |
| Residence in Need of Major Repair |  |
| Business Concentration |  |
| Industry in Good Condition |  |
| Industry in Need of Some Improvement |  |
| Park |  |
| Institution |  |

A Blighted Area

B Housing and Environmental Problems

C Well Maintained Residential Community

D Diagonal Street

E Obsolete Commercial

F Underused Railroad Yard

G Industrial Sources of Air Pollution

H Adverse Mix of Land Uses.

V Substantial Vacant Tract

Objectives

Program recommendations for the Southwest Development Area are directed toward regaining the Area's former role as a major employment center and improving the environment in its residential neighborhoods. The following long-range objectives are based upon *The Comprehensive Plan of Chicago* and should be made the basis for public and private programs in the Area:

1. Encourage further industrial development and redevelopment in the two major industrial concentrations along the South Branch of the Chicago River and along Pershing Road. Specifically, new industries with higher employment densities (measured in terms of jobs per acre used for industrial land) would aid in the city's goal of increasing employment opportunities.

2. Encourage continued residential rehabilitation throughout the Southwest Development Area. Develop additional community facilities and expand and improve the delivery of public and private services.

3. Resolve conflicts between industrial and residential activities through the use of a variety of physical design techniques that stress orderly development and beautification.

4. Strengthen programs dealing with air and water pollution control.

5. Develop modern business centers and reduce excessive amounts of land used for commercial strips.

6. Develop the South Branch of the Chicago River and its industrial district to include recreation facilities and to improve the Area's appearance.

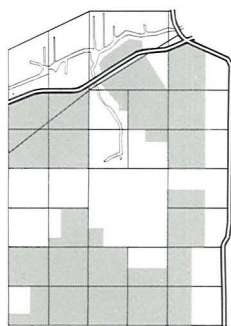
7. Develop transportation patterns to provide for the effective movement of goods, services and persons into, around and through the Development Area. Specific efforts should be directed toward providing for the smooth flow of heavy industrial traffic around rather than through residential areas and toward providing increased express transit service for the Area.

Population Characteristics

The Southwest Development Area has been losing population for the past three decades. The census population declined from 191,425 to 147,685 between 1930 and 1960, a decrease of 22.8 per cent. During this same period, the wage earning population (20-64 years), as a percentage of the total, remained relatively unchanged, while the proportion of people under 18 decreased by 4.8 percentage points, and the proportion over 65 increased by 5.5 percentage points. The following factors have contributed greatly to the population decline: the movement of the stockyards-oriented industry and accompanying employment opportunities from the city, the movement of younger families out of the older, nationality based neighborhoods, and the construction of the Dan Ryan Expressway in the late 1950's.

Bridgeport, McKinley Park and New City:

The residential communities west of the Penn-Central railroad embankment have generally maintained similar population characteristics. They are separated by the stockyards area and the industrial districts along the South Branch of the Chicago River and along Pershing Road. For many years these



communities received the various nationality groups that came to Chicago to work in the stockyards and other nearby industries. While employment in the stockyards has declined substantially, large ethnic communities still survive—the percentage of foreign-stock in 1960 in the

western communities exceeds the city-wide figure by 9.1 percentage points.

Because historically the population of these communities has been closely identified with local industrial activity, it is not surprising to find that a majority of the labor force is employed in "blue collar" work, with only an average of 23.2 per cent employed in "white collar" work (the city-wide average is 37 per cent).

The median family income is higher than the city-wide levels, but the median number of school years completed, 8.8 years in each of these three areas, is below the city-wide median of 10.0 years.

Armour Square and Fuller Park:

The communities to the east of the Penn-Central railroad embankment exhibit a pattern of population and social characteristics that differs from that of the western communities.

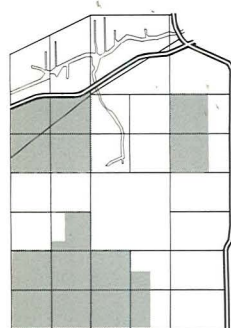


In this eastern corridor there are two residential communities separated by 35th Street and White Sox Park. The community north of 35th Street had a 1960 census population of 6,410. This population was highly mixed, with Negroes, Spanish-speaking people, and a high percentage of first and second generation people of foreign extraction. In the community to the south of 35th Street, there were 15,997 people in 1960, over 95 per cent of whom were Negro.

Residence

Ninety-eight per cent of the 47,000 housing units in the Southwest Development Area were built before 1940. The great majority of these, considerably more than the city-wide average of 54 per cent, were built before 1920. The structures are mainly single-family brick or frame buildings mixed with small two- and three-flat buildings. Standards of residential and environmental maintenance are highest in the areas to the west of Ashland Avenue, and decline gradually in the residential areas between Ashland Avenue and Halsted Street. A middle range of residential and environmental maintenance standards is found in the residential areas between Halsted Street and the Penn-Central Railroad at Wallace Street, and conditions decline sharply to the east of the railroad embankment where standards of maintenance are generally poor.

In the areas shown on the map to the left, approximately twenty per cent of the residential structures were considered deficient* in 1960. Several sections in these areas are recognized as outstanding examples of rehabilitation and maintenance in older neighborhoods. Strong community organiza-

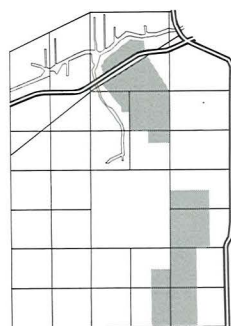


*Deficient housing units include all census categories except those units that were sound, with all plumbing, as determined by the 1960 Census.



tions and the high rate of owner occupancy, which is as much as 11 percentage points higher than the city average, have to a large extent been responsible for the high standards maintained in these areas. The well maintained homes, many of which are built of brick, and the tree-lined streets help to create desirable residential environments.

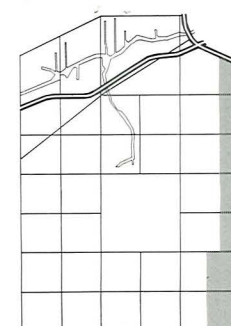
In the areas shown on the map to the left, approximately forty per cent of the residential structures were considered deficient in 1960. Many of the buildings are frame, and factors such as the nearness of railroads and industry, the prevalence of air and water pollution, traffic congestion and the lack of adequate recreation space require attention if these areas are to be made more desirable residential neighborhoods. Bridgeport Homes, at Halsted and 31st streets, are



Although much of the housing was constructed prior to 1920, private rehabilitation has substantially improved the appearance of several residential sections in the Development Area.

Chicago Housing Authority town houses which are well maintained and are an asset to the surrounding area. In several places, immediately to the southwest of Bridgeport Homes, the housing is two to four stories high and built very close to already narrow streets, giving the streets a distinctive character but leading to problems of traffic congestion.

The Penn-Central railroad embankment at Wallace Street historically has separated the eastern corridor of mixed industrial areas and residential communities from the remainder of the Development Area. With the completion of the Dan Ryan Expressway in the early 1960's, these residential communities found themselves isolated and constricted. This corridor contains Wentworth Gardens, a Chicago Housing Authority low-rise development, and Kenwood Gardens, a Chi-



cago Dwellings Association development of single-family homes built for sale to moderate-income families. Both of these developments are attractive and well maintained. The remainder of the single-family and small walk-up apartment buildings, however, are of pre-1920 construction and few are properly maintained. Over fifty per cent of all the homes in this area were considered deficient by 1960, and many of these are now badly deteriorated or dilapidated. Overcrowding is significantly higher than elsewhere in the Development Area, twenty-five per cent of the homes having more than one person per room compared with ten per cent in the remainder of the Development Area and 11.7 per cent in the city as a whole. The mixture of obsolete industrial buildings, deteriorated housing and vacant industrial and residential land

creates an undesirable environment for both residence and industry. In addition, the part of this strip to the south of 47th Street is particularly constricted, narrowing to a width of only two blocks.

Residential rehabilitation is becoming increasingly important as the neighborhoods of the Southwest Development Area age. The many neighborhood organizations which are concerned with upgrading existing residences, obtaining financing for rehabilitation, and encouraging new construction will continue to have a vital role to play in maintaining and increasing the capacity of these areas to attract and retain middle and moderate income families. More formal programs of conservation to reinforce the efforts of local organizations would help in some areas to ensure

the continued vitality of the Development Area. The continued construction of new single-family homes on vacant lots should preserve the character of these areas, while development of business and community centers, further development of open space for recreation, and increased attention to educational needs would enhance their attractiveness.

The residential areas described as being in the middle range of housing quality and immediately adjacent to industrial areas are generally sound enough to benefit from limited programs of rehabilitation and conservation. These fringe areas could also be improved by landscaping and selected street closing. The principles and standards of conservation and rehabilitation can be applied to the community in the eastern corridor north of 35th Street as well. In the same corridor, south of 35th Street, more concentrated public and private actions are indicated. The areas between 35th and 37th streets and between 43rd and 47th streets might be considered for residential conservation programs since they already contain cores of good housing and considerable vacant land. To the south of 47th Street where the narrowness of the residential strip imposes an undesirable environment, the potential exists for long range development of an industrial corridor between the expressway and the railroad embankment. There are a few small and isolated residential areas within the industrial concentrations of the Southwest Development Area; these too should be considered for eventual addition to the industrial land supply.

An improvement in the residential environment, particularly where residential uses border on industry, would supplement other activities such as expanding and increasing social services, retaining and attracting industry, and encouraging younger families to remain or move in, and would increase both the capability and opportunity of the Development Area's residents to lead a valuable and satisfying life.

A better arrangement of land uses is needed in parts of the Southwest Development Area. Here houses are virtually isolated by large industrial and railroad complexes.



Recreation

The residential community of McKinley Park is the only one which has a park space-to-population ratio meeting or exceeding the *Comprehensive Plan* standard of two acres per thousand persons. Accordingly, the other four residential communities in the Southwest Development Area will receive priority attention through public actions to provide recreation facilities and programs.

Sherman Park with 60 acres of land, a swimming pool and fieldhouse facilities is a major asset. Several medium sized parks have swimming pools and extensive athletic facilities. Armour Square Park, Fuller Park, Cornell Square Park, Davis Square Park, and McGuane Park are of this type with a size in excess of two city blocks. Many smaller facilities are located throughout the Development Area.

Public action could result in the temporary use and maintenance of currently vacant land for recreation or play space, joint school-park and park-mall development, and programs designed to maximize the use of existing facilities. The focus of this initial public activity would be the northeast part of the Development Area, which the *Comprehensive Plan* identifies as an area with special social program needs.

The priority actions would be directed toward (1) making cleaner and safer the extensive vacant land that presently serves as informal, unstructured play space and (2) improving existing facilities and intensifying their use.

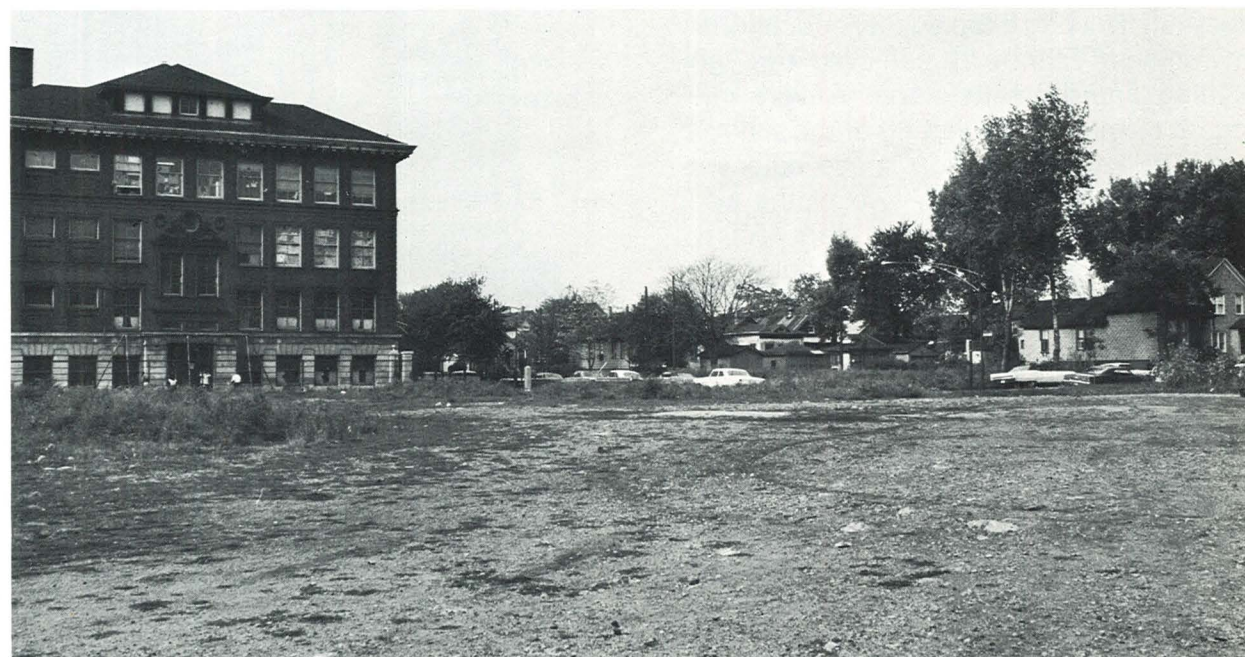
The development of a park-mall system of pedestrian walkways ought to be undertaken as the second phase of development. Park-mall and greenway development could link schools, community centers, parks, shopping areas, and even industry to residential areas through the consolidation of vacant land and the partial or complete closing of some streets. Such green spaces and walkways should be set up with appropriate plantings, street furniture and play equipment.

In many parts of the Southwest Development Area, streets are interrupted by industrial uses, vacant industrial land or railroad embankments. The discontinuous



streets might be redeveloped into park-mall and greenway connectors between the residential communities and industrial areas. Industrial developers in the area could improve the general environment of the industrial-residential fringe areas through cooperative efforts with nearby communities. Combined industrial-recreational uses for such areas as parking lots or vacant land might also be considered.

McKinley Park, a 70-acre multi-purpose recreation area, is one of the principal features of the Southwest Development Area.



This photo illustrates the opportunity that exists for using vacant land as temporary or permanent park use. In this case, the school playground could be linked to a nearby park.

Education

An expansion and improvement program is needed to modernize school facilities and to avoid overcrowding. The Board of Education is engaged in a city-wide program of long-range planning for educational facilities. Its studies will yield information on changes in enrollments and age and condition of facilities, and will propose additions and rehabilitation or replacement for those facilities and areas in need.

Seventeen of the Area's 20 public elementary schools are more than fifty years old, and ten are more than seventy years old. Three elementary schools have been constructed since 1911: Sherman in 1937, Hendricks in 1954 and Healy in 1962. Abbot, Parkman and Sherman schools have had additions built during the past twenty years. In 1967, thirteen schools in the Area had more than thirty pupils per classroom and ten of these had more than the city-wide public school average of 32.5 pupils per classroom.

Since the Board of Education estimates through 1971 show increased enrollments, future classroom needs will increase. The schools which now have the lowest pupil-classroom ratio are located in the corners of the Area, but the greatest increase in school age children may be anticipated in the south-central neighborhoods of the Development Area.

The goal of having a top quality educational environment cannot be achieved through building improvement alone. A very important element is the setting of the school, particularly the recreation space adjacent to or available to it. Only two of the elementary schools now have a park facility adjacent; the remainder of the schools have inadequate recreation space.

Richards Vocational High School and Tilden General and Technical High School are within the Development Area, and two general high schools—Kelly and Gage Park—are not far from the western boundary. Tilden High School, which is in need of major building improvements and outdoor, school-oriented recreation space, is programmed for rehabilitation.

A new general high school, and a replacement for Richards Vocational High School, are also planned. Since school playground

facilities are extremely restricted in the Development Area, efforts should be made to relate new school construction and school expansions to local parks and obtainable vacant land.

Complementing the public education institutions in the Area are eighteen parochial elementary schools, four parochial general high schools and one parochial commercial high school. Over one-third of the school population of the Development Area attends these parochial schools.

Libraries

Applying the Chicago Public Library's recommended standard for branch libraries of a service radius of one mile and the goal of providing appropriate library buildings, large parts of the Southwest Development Area are underserved. The southern part is served by a branch in a library-owned building, but of the other three branches, two are in rented premises and one is a traveling branch stop. These three should



St. Mary of Perpetual Help is one of the Area's many parochial schools. Over one-third of the Development Area's school population attends parochial facilities.

be replaced with library-owned buildings. Additional coverage is needed to meet the Library's standard in the eastern corridor and the northwestern sector which are at present outside the one-mile radius of a branch.

As new facilities are developed, they should be located in business concentrations for maximum convenience and visibility. The clustering of various public facilities in this manner can help create community activity centers serving residential areas.

A city-wide plan for libraries is now being developed and the 1967-71 *Joint Capital Improvements Program* includes twenty new branch libraries with sites to be determined.

Social Programs

The Southwest Development Area is fortunate in having a variety of organizations and institutions which not only provide necessary services, but also inspire rehabilitation and revitalization of older neighborhoods. More than fifteen service organizations, including settlement houses, church-affiliates and public agencies offer social and recreational programs and welfare and educational services. The Chicago Commission on Youth Welfare operates a unit in the Area and has established programs geared toward a coordinated approach to meeting community needs.

There is an increasing proportion of elderly people in the Southwest Development Area, a result of both an increased life expectancy and the movement of second and third generations to newer residential areas of the city. The population over 65 is composed of many individuals living on fixed incomes and having specialized needs in housing, recreation, medical care, transportation and other areas. These social and community services are not presently available in the Development Area in sufficient quality or quantity. In addition to the services and organizations mentioned above, recent studies by The Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago suggest expansion of day care facilities to provide for the needs of more working mothers and increasing numbers of children.

In contrast to the situation in Bridgeport, McKinley Park and New City, the social



Parkman Elementary School is typical of the many schools with a need for additional recreational space.

services available to the residents of the two eastern communities, Armour Square and Fuller Park, are below levels of minimum adequacy. A comprehensive program of public action will be required to interrupt the degenerative cycle of poverty affecting many of the residents of these communities.

A variety of educational programs providing job and technical training for persons of school-age and older should be initiated in an effort to increase the residents' capability to enrich their lives.

An example of expanding job opportunities is the Inner City Development Corporation, one of the developers of industrial land in the DUR's Garfield-LaSalle Project. This non-profit group has undertaken a program to stimulate new industrial enterprises to provide jobs for untrained individuals.

This expansion of employment opportunity could proceed through apprenticeship, job placement and vocational guidance programs sponsored individually or jointly by local industries and public agencies including the Chicago Board of Education.

While emphasis on employment capability and opportunity programs will lead to greater income and lower unemployment rates, supplementary programs in health, adult education, public safety and youth services, among others, will work toward the establishment of a more desirable environment through the elimination of the causes of poverty.

Public Safety and Health

In recent years city government agencies have been called upon to play more important and positive roles in a wider range of safety and health fields. For example, the establishment of the Department of Air Pollution Control indicated the growing concern with environmental health—the purity of air, water and land. The programs of the long-established health and safety agencies, the Police and Fire departments and the Board of Health, have been broadened to include positive social and educational services, as well as crime, fire, and disease prevention. These agencies have emphasized the idea that public safety and health are not the responsibility of government alone. They have initiated programs to encourage citizen support and involvement.

Two current Police Department goals are to increase manpower and to improve communications with citizens about police service needs. The department will then be able to carry out more effective crime prevention efforts and, more importantly, to work with other community organizations to help greater numbers of young citizens. The department's current cooperative program with the Commission on Youth Welfare will be continued and expanded.

All of the residential communities of the Southwest Development Area lie within the Ninth Police District and the Third Police Area. The headquarters facilities for these units are in good condition and not currently programmed for replacement. A

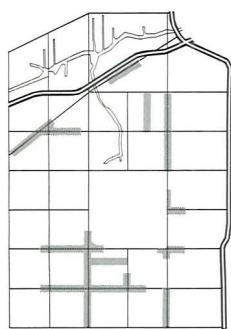
new Second Area headquarters is scheduled for construction at 51st Street and Wentworth Avenue. This will include a helicopter landing site. The emergency medical services that this will make possible will also serve the Southwest Development Area. There are now 11 fire stations serving the Development Area. The Fire Department's long-range improvement plan calls for retaining six of these, eliminating the remaining five, and building two new major stations in the vicinities of 47th Street and Racine Avenue, and Pershing Road and Ashland Avenue.

The Chicago Board of Health Infant Welfare Station, the University of Chicago Lying-in Hospital Dispensary, and The Evangelical Hospital of Chicago lie within the Development Area and provide needed health services.

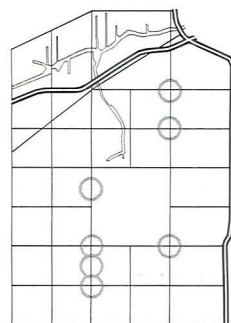
It is recommended that the hospitals in and near the Development Area cooperate in the Chicago Board of Health's "vertical" comprehensive health care system. This program involves three levels of health care for the medically indigent: in the home, at the local health center, and in the hospital or other institution. At the first level, public health nurses make periodic home visits to evaluate family health needs, advise families on good health practices, and assist them in obtaining needed medical assistance. At the second level, the nurses work out of local health centers, which provide preventive, diagnostic, and treatment services as needed. When required, patients are referred to the "parent" hospital, the third level of service.

Business

Retail shopping facilities in the Southwest Development Area follow the general city-wide pattern of commercial frontage along major streets. Most of these aging commercial ribbons have inadequate off-street parking and high vacancy rates. The development of a system of shopping centers at major intersections would improve service to residents and strengthen business opportunities. Some of this change could be brought about in connection with the planned widening of major streets. Excess land now used for business could be used for recreation or new housing.



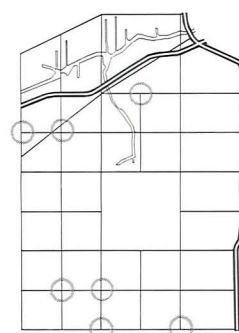
Shopping concentrations now exist at several important intersections. There is a major shopping district at 35th and Halsted streets and a very large one at 47th Street and Ashland Avenue, with neighborhood business districts at 51st Street and Ashland Avenue and at 31st and Halsted streets. Discount centers with adequate off-street parking



have been established in recent years at 47th and Halsted, 41st and Ashland, and 49th and Ashland.

The Department of Urban Renewal is presently studying the 47th Street and Ashland Avenue area in terms of future needs and development. The northeast corner containing a high proportion of blighted commercial and residential uses might be made available as a new location for the many merchants who have served the community successfully for many years.

The shopping concentrations at other intersections could be improved as modern neighborhood business centers through private rehabilitation.

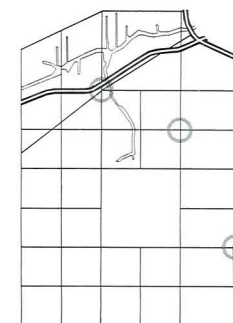


Locations where this should be possible are at 31st Street and Racine Avenue, 35th Street and Damen Avenue, 35th Street and Western Avenue, 51st Street and Ashland Avenue, 51st Street and Damen Avenue, 55th and Halsted streets, and 55th Street and Ashland Avenue. Landscaped walkways could be used to link other community features such as schools, parks and churches to the business centers, making them focal points of community activities as well as public services.

As an example, a new branch library might

be included within the proposed 47th Street and Ashland Avenue shopping district. Convenience shopping facilities, the smaller neighborhood stores, should be retained or provided as needed throughout the area.

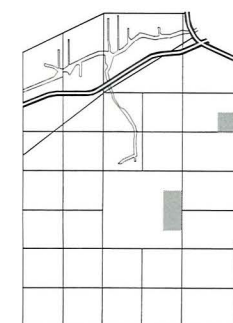
Three special service districts are proposed in the *Comprehensive Plan* to accommodate



such uses as automobile repair and tire shops, building supply houses, heating contractors, and similar uses. Suggested locations are in the vicinity of 35th and Halsted streets, Archer and Ashland avenues, and 47th

Street and the Dan Ryan Expressway.

Two large commercial activities serving city-wide and larger market areas are also located in the Southwest Development Area. These are White Sox Park and the International Amphitheater. The Dan Ryan Expressway insures excellent access to each of these major facilities, and while each is the source of



traffic congestion and parking problems in nearby residential areas they also generate business and create jobs in the areas.



Many commercial frontages in the Southwest Development Area contain deteriorated and vacant properties. In several locations, opportunities exist to consolidate strip commercial activities into planned centers.

Industry

Two of the city's largest concentrations of industrial land are found in the Southwest Development Area. The opportunities offered by available waterways and early rail development were clear to industrial developers over 100 years ago. The Illinois and Michigan Canal, linking the Chicago River with the Des Plaines and the Mississippi Rivers, was completed in 1848. Nine years later railroad service was provided in the area by the Chicago and Alton Railroad, and the first of the area's major industrial sections began to develop.

The South Branch Industrial District:

After the Chicago Fire many industries relocated in this area, and many new lumber and brick yards were formed as well. The slips along the river were dredged out and extensive rail sidings built. Much of the land along the river today remains in the same low intensity uses that were seen there nearly 100 years ago. Yet this industrial land is located in the heart of one of the largest skilled and unskilled labor markets in the nation.

While water-borne commerce has declined in the area and truck usage has grown faster than rail, this part of Chicago remains exceptionally well suited for industry since it has excellent access to both the Dan Ryan and Adlai Stevenson expressways. The strengthening of sound existing industry and the attraction of high quality new industry to this area is an important goal for the city. The work of the Mayor's Committee for Economic and Cultural Development with the aid of the Department of Development and Planning is aimed at achieving this goal.

Several large vacant tracts are now available. More can be created, but specific improvements will be required. Many of the remaining slips extending north from the river should be filled in to provide additional land for industry and to remove an important source of water pollution. The means of disposing of industrial wastes must be improved and made both safe and sanitary, meeting high standards of air and water pollution control. The river banks

should be landscaped and made both clean and safe. A measure of the goals that can and should be agreed upon for this area can be illustrated by example: it should be made possible for the pleasure boat building industry to develop along this part of the river, for sales as well as construction to take place there, and for the customers themselves to use and enjoy the river. Achieving such goals will call for much work, public as well as private, but the opportunities are there. On the public side much work is already underway, from the continuing improvements of the Metropolitan Sanitary District to the planning of new bridges and improved roadways. *The Joint Capital Improvements Program for Chicago* lists two new bridges for construction during the five year period 1967-1971 in the Southwest Development Area at a cost of \$3,050,000.

The industrial concentration along the South Branch continues to the west along the Sanitary and Ship Canal into the Far Southwest Development Area, and to the south along the South Fork of the river within the Southwest Development Area. Most of the productive industrial activity in the South Fork area is found in and around the Central Manufacturing District, one of the nation's first planned industrial districts, which stretches along the South Fork between 35th Street and Pershing Road.

Some new plants have been built here in recent years, one of which has recently completed an improvement program that includes a new office and industrial struc-



Upgrading the riverbanks of the South Branch of the Chicago River, plus filling obsolete, un-used slips, could provide additional land for river-oriented industry and a more attractive waterway for pleasure craft.

ture with extensive landscaping. Local efforts are now under way to organize industrialists for similar improvement programs of private maintenance and rehabilitation. Structures in this district present special opportunities for utilizing modern production methods adaptable to multiple-story buildings. The area of mixed housing and industry between the manufacturing district and Halsted Street continues to offer some potential land for industrial expansion.

Existing industries should be encouraged to remain and environmental improvement and special assistance programs should be instituted for industries that want to enlarge their physical plants.

Industries which can make maximum use of the South Branch district's locational advantages are those which serve city-wide, metropolitan, and regional markets, especially those activities which provide storage and distribution facilities and service to other commercial and industrial establishments. Many of these firms can operate in multi-story structures. Densities can be achieved for industrial buildings and employment in the South Branch district that are higher than in single-story suburban industrial areas.

An additional source of land for new industrial development is the south bank site occupied by the Chicago Produce Terminal between Ashland and Western avenues. Much of the terminal's operation at this site



The loft buildings in the Central Manufacturing District along Pershing Road have been well-maintained and are an example of the intensive industrial uses in the Southwest Development Area.

depends on its relation to other market functions, so its relocation within the proposed metropolitan area food handling center should be considered. Another good site for industrial expansion is the vacant 90-acre tract on the north bank of the South Branch adjacent to Western Avenue. It is also recommended that the two small residential areas on Ashland Avenue north of 35th Street and on Loomis Avenue north of the Stevenson Expressway be considered for industrial development and expansion in long range planning.

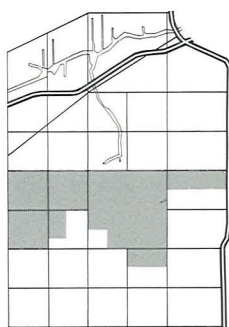
A major quarry occupies a site south of the Stevenson Expressway and west of Halsted Street. To avoid the possibility of leaving a permanent surface scar upon completion of quarrying activities, the quarry could be utilized as a surface reservoir in conjunction with a proposed means of dealing with excess storm water. Under this proposal, storm water would be drained into underground tunnels and chambers from which it would be pumped to surface reservoirs at a convenient time and controlled rate of flow. In addition to dealing with excess rain water, the system could use reversible pumps to permit the generation of pumped-storage hydroelectricity. Water would be dropped from the reservoir during peak load periods to generate high-value power and

pumped back to the surface at off-peak periods. The circulation and aeration involved in power generation would aid in the water's decontamination. Purified discharge waters could be routed the short distance to the South Branch, and the reservoir could be developed into an attractively landscaped water feature contributing to local environmental improvements. Similar proposals are being considered for other parts of Chicago.

The second major industrial concentration in the Southwest Development Area lies immediately south of the South Fork Area and includes the famous stockyards of Chicago.

The Pershing Road Industrial Corridor:

This large concentration of industrial land runs the length of the south side of Pershing Road from the Dan Ryan Expressway west to Western Avenue. The width of the corridor varies from one-half mile to more than a mile. Again, the history of the area is important to the understanding of the



Although the traditional operations go on, a major concern for the Southwest Development Area is to continue to develop the stockyards for contemporary industrial uses.



The limestone quarry south of the Stevenson Expressway continues in operation but could be used as a reservoir.

present and to the development of plans and proposals for the future. The history of the area is basically the history of the stockyards. In 1865 the Union Stockyards were opened, consolidating yards and slaughter-houses from all over the city in the half square mile of this corridor north of 47th Street between Halsted Street and Racine Avenue. The yards became a focal point for every railroad serving Chicago. In the half square mile west of Racine Avenue to Ashland Avenue meat processing firms followed and the area known as Packingtown was developed. With this base major rail yards were built to the west and more industries, related to the meat industry or to the rails or both, developed along the east-west corridor. The Central Manufacturing District opened its second planned industrial area along Pershing from Ashland Avenue to Western Avenue before the First World War. In this space the United States Quartermaster Corps built the substantial buildings, now privately owned and well maintained, that are an area landmark. At the height of operation, in the early 1940's, the stockyards and Packingtown meant more than 30,000 jobs

to Chicago and particularly to the residents of the Southwest Development Area. The westward movement of the meat packing industry caused a decline in job opportunities which culminated in the mid-1950's when most major firms closed their Chicago operations. The result was a serious need for jobs among the people in nearby areas and a large amount of unused industrial land.

The redevelopment of that land with job producing industries has been a high priority problem that is today only partly solved. Rail yards that are now larger than needed, large tracts of land with extensive existing construction unsuited for new uses and a complex of private streets and utilities have presented many serious physical and legal obstacles. One part of the area, the Morgan Industrial District, has been redeveloped with new, high quality plants. The city with federal assistance is now undertaking the building of Racine Avenue and 43rd Street, and major utilities needed to open the remainder of the area, and private developers will follow with additional planned modern industrial parks. It is estimated that the construction of this one and one half miles of major streets will trigger the development of 12,000 to 15,000 new jobs in the area. Prime location alone will not insure success of this project: air pollution and offensive odors must be controlled; the area must be made attractive to compete with newer areas; and the kinds of industry that employ large numbers of well paid people per acre of land used must be found and persuaded to locate here. The quality of development in this central part of the corridor will have great influence on future development in the areas to the east and west.

In addition to the South Branch and Pershing Road areas a number of smaller industrial development opportunities should be considered in the Southwest Development Area. These are associated with the Penn-Central tracks and the Dan Ryan Expressway. In the southeast part of the Development Area a large rail yard and a narrow strip of housing offer long range potential for industrial development. Smaller vacant or under-used sites of five to ten acres are to be found along this and other rail lines in the Development Area. Their redevelopment, whether with industry or other use should be of concern to the community.



The replacement of aging commercial strips with modern shopping centers would improve service to residents and strengthen business opportunities.

Transportation

The Dan Ryan and Adlai Stevenson expressway corridors of high accessibility provide excellent access to the Southwest Development Area. The Dan Ryan provides access to regular half-mile interchanges. Access to and from the Stevenson is more limited, with no interchange at Western Avenue and only partial access at Ashland Avenue. Many trucks travel through the McKinley Park area to use the Damen Avenue interchange, the only full interchange in the Development Area.

A high priority should be given to the improvement of Western Avenue as a corridor of high accessibility, and the provision of a full interchange with the Stevenson Expressway should be considered. Another major need is for an improved east-west traffic connection between the Dan Ryan Expressway and Western Avenue. To meet this need the entire length of Pershing Road within this Development Area will be brought up to major street standards, including the provision of parallel service road where needed. The design of this improvement is now scheduled in the *Joint Capital Improvements Program*. Other streets in the area which should be brought to major street standards as improvement opportunities permit include: Halsted Street, Ashland Avenue, 31st Street, and 47th Street.

Improvements to most half-mile streets will be required to bring them up to secondary thoroughfare standards. These include Racine Avenue, Damen Avenue, 35th, 43rd, and 51st streets. The extension of Racine

Avenue and 43rd Street described earlier will be of special importance for the future development of the Area.

The intersections of major streets serving the industrial districts—Pershing, 47th, Western, Ashland, and Halsted—will require special design features, such as wide turning lanes to accommodate truck traffic. The major bridges across the South Branch of the Chicago River are scheduled to be repaired or replaced.

There are extensive rail freight facilities in the Area, but their usage has decreased gradually over the last two decades. Several switchyards probably could now be converted to other uses without affecting existing service demands. Although diagonal streets should generally be deemphasized as through routes, it may be necessary to retain Archer Avenue in the Southwest Development Area to serve as an emergency by-pass for the Stevenson Expressway during periods of reconstruction or other major traffic tie-ups. At complex six-leg intersections, Archer Avenue could be realigned to reduce the number of traffic conflicts.

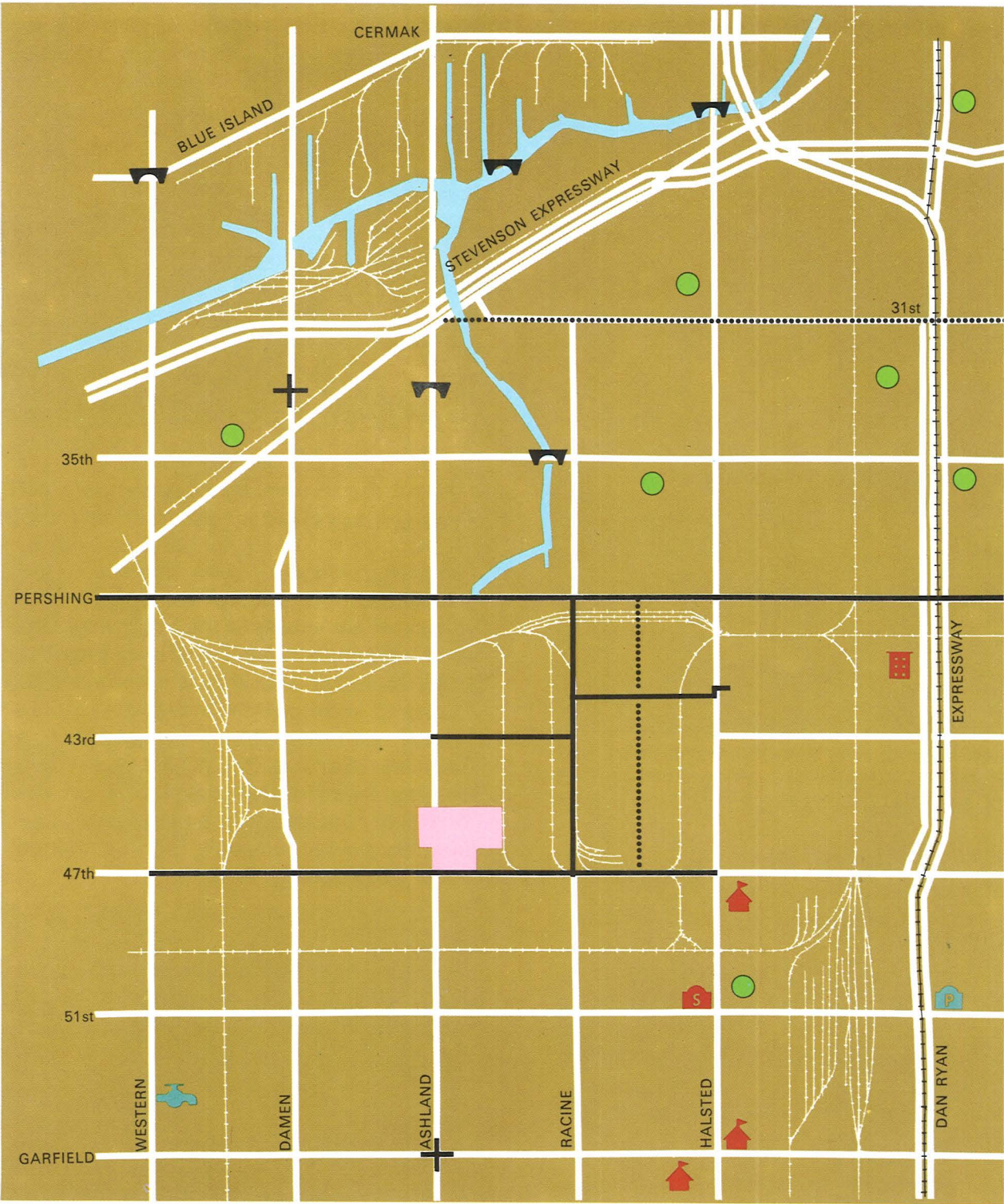
There currently is no rail rapid transit service in the Southwest Area, but, as a result of the recent bond issue, a rapid transit line will soon be provided in the median strip of the Dan Ryan Expressway. Express transit service should also be provided in the Western Avenue corridor and on the Stevenson Expressway. Local bus routes at half-mile intervals would then provide feeder service to these lines.

Major Capital Improvements in The Southwest Development Area

The map illustrates major projects included in the 1967-1971 *Joint Capital Improvements Program*, as well as a number of additional projects scheduled since completion of the report. The Capital Improvements Program is for a five-year period. It is revised annually and submitted to the Chicago Plan Commission for approval. The Plan Commission, under the inter-agency planning referral procedure, also reviews each project prior to construction to insure that projects are in conformity with *The Comprehensive Plan of Chicago*.

The projects identified on the map are at three different stages of development: projects recently completed, projects underway, and projects proposed within the next five years. Some area-wide projects, such as the recently completed comprehensive alley lighting program, are not mapped.

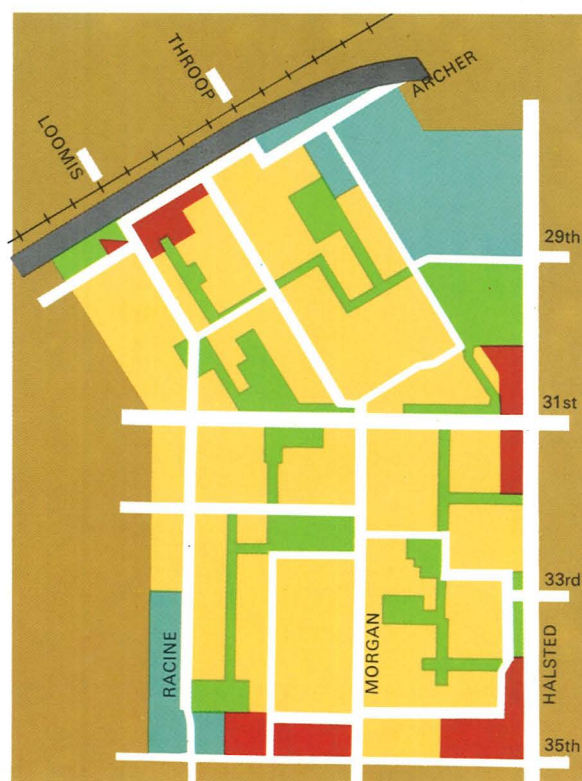
There are three major planning studies currently underway in the Southwest Development Area: the Stockyards Economic Development Project, the Department of Urban Renewal's study area at 45th and Ashland Avenue, and an improvement study for Pershing Road. In addition, several public agencies have initiated city-wide development plans which will result in additional recommendations for improved public facilities and services in this Area.



| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Bridge and Viaduct Improvement | | Rapid Transit Extension | |
| Street Improvement | | Community Improvement | |
| Intersection Improvement | | Public Housing | |
| Street Lighting | | Sanitation Facility (New) | |
| Pumping Station Improvement | | School Improvement | |
| Park Improvement | | Police Area Headquarters (New) | |



EXISTING



ALTERNATIVE A



ALTERNATIVE B

Environmental Patterns in The Southwest Development Area

These sketches present the existing environmental patterns in the area immediately south of the Stevenson Expressway and west of Halsted Street and show two of the potential alternatives for the future development of this area in accordance with the recommendations of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

The alternatives illustrate the application of the principles of the *Comprehensive Plan* to solve problems of excessive through traffic on residential or local streets, a lack of recreation and open space within the neighborhoods, and excessive and often obsolete commercial areas along the streets.

The diagrams propose a system of greenways for recreational use and to link parks, churches, schools and commercial and community areas. Halsted and 31st streets are recommended for widening and the local street system has been redesigned to discourage through traffic and facilitate pedestrian movement. Commercial areas have been consolidated with community or special service centers at the intersections of mile and half mile streets and with neighborhood and convenience centers located within the community.

The widening of major streets allows for the consolidation of commercial areas, and the increased street capacity would make possible the systematized closing of local streets and the substitution of greenway for pavement.

Residential



Institutions and Parks



Business



Industry



Summary

The illustration opposite this summary presents an overview of the major issues identified through the Development Area process and possible directions toward their resolution. Through this device it is possible to see how various ideas contribute to the design of the total fabric for the Development Area. To realize the overall potential of the Development Area it will be necessary for government agencies to work closely with each other, with citizens' groups and with other organizations.

A. The following major streets that serve the Southwest Development Area—Halsted Street, Ashland and Western avenues, and Pershing Road should be given top priority for upgrading to major street standards as the *Comprehensive Plan* suggests. Next priority should be given to the following thoroughfares—Cermak Road, 55th and 47th streets. Racine and Damen avenues, and 43rd and 51st streets should have third priority for improvement as half mile streets. Special attention should be given to the feasibility of providing full interchanges at the intersection of the Stevenson Expressway and major streets such as Ashland and Western avenues in conjunction with the improvement of these streets.

B. Rapid Transit service will soon be provided in the median strip of the Dan Ryan Expressway. Express transit service is proposed for the Western Avenue corridor as well as the Adlai Stevenson Expressway.

C. Focusing on the sound housing areas of Wentworth Gardens (CHA) and Kenwood Gardens (CDA), residential redevelopment should be programmed along the eastern edge of the Development Area between 35th and 47th streets. The presence of vacant land and good quality public housing offers opportunities for formal

programs that will redevelop these deteriorated residential areas.

D. The portion of the Bridgeport community west of Halsted and south of 31st Street has problems of traffic congestion and some deteriorating housing, but offers opportunities for imaginative development of a combined street and park-mall internal circulation system to link the schools, parks, churches, shopping facilities and housing.

E. An active program of conservation and rehabilitation should be pursued throughout the McKinley Park community. The proposed concentration of commercial facilities and deemphasis of diagonal streets offer opportunities for the development of an internal system of greenways, park-malls and streets to connect homes with shops, parks, schools and industrial areas.

F. The southwest portion of the Development Area has been involved in an exemplary residential rehabilitation and conservation program led by local community organizations. Continued work is needed to maintain the present levels of residential quality.

G. The South Branch Industrial District offers great opportunities for the development of new industry but serious environmental problems must be met and overcome.

H. The planned construction of Racine Avenue and 43rd Street will strengthen the industrial redevelopment activities for the stockyards portion of the Pershing Road Industrial Corridor. In order to develop both the new roadways and new industry, problems of internal railroad and vehicular circulation and air and water pollution must be studied and solved.

Planning Framework Southwest Development Area

Residential



Business



Institutional



Park



Industrial



A Major Street Improvement

B Corridors of High Accessibility

C Programs of Community Improvement

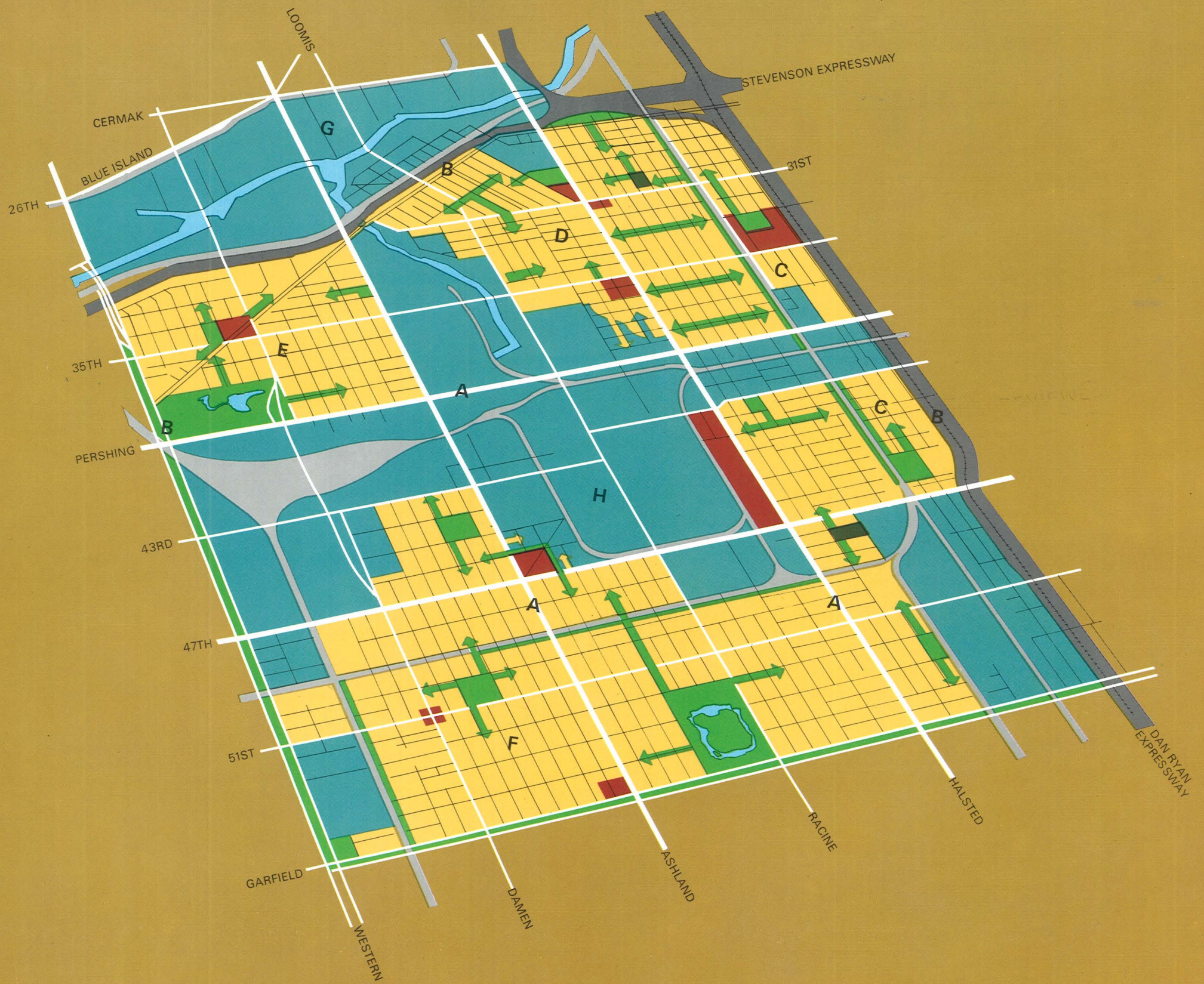
D Community Park Mall Opportunities

E Conservation and Rehabilitation

F Code Enforcement and
Community Maintenance

G South Branch Industrial Development

H Stockyards Redevelopment



**Department of Development
and Planning
City of Chicago**

Lewis W. Hill
Commissioner

Robert W. Christensen
Deputy Commissioner

Jerral T. Harper
Assistant Commissioner

Martin R. Murphy
Assistant Commissioner

The preparation of this report was the responsibility of:

Martin R. Murphy
Eric G. Yondorf

Among the Department staff who made significant contributions to the content of this report:

Thomas J. Davies
Dennis A. Harder
Alison Kenning

Others who contributed to the report:

John Doolen
Peter T. Haverkamp
Thomas Kapsalis
Lois J. Koch
Bonnie W. Marantz

Those who aided in the production of the report:

James C. McInerney
Samuel Mazzone
Laurence T. Young, Jr.
Robert Hayes
James M. Miller, Sr.
William Salzman
John H. Taaffe

Photographs:
Art Dahl

This report has been prepared as a discussion document. Many city departments and agencies, private organizations, and community groups have already made contributions to this report, and their assistance is gratefully acknowledged. The Department of Development and Planning looks forward to continuing and expanding these relationships in the future, as Development Area proposals are reviewed.

Assisted by a grant administered by the Renewal Assistance Office of the Department of Housing and Urban Development under Section 405 of the Housing Act of 1959.

